

Appl. No. : **10/687,523**
Filed : **October 15, 2003**

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace paragraph [0011] on page 5 of the Specification as filed with the following paragraph:

ClCKb is a member of the ClC family of chloride channels and participates in the renal re-absorption of NaCl; cf. Waldegg S. and Jentsch T. J. (2000), J Am Soc Nephrol 11, 1331-1339. The functional expression of ClCKa as another member of the ClC family, and of ClCKb channels, requires the co-expression of barttin, which thus is an essential β subunit of these channels; cf. Estevez R. et al. (2001), Nature 414, 558-561. The functional significance of both, ClCKb and barttin is illustrated by rare monogenic disorders. The entire nucleotide and amino acid sequence of human ClCKb is disclosed in Genebank NCBI, Accession number NM_000085; cf. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/.

Please replace paragraph [0015] on pages 6-7 of the Specification as filed with the following paragraph:

According to the invention, the term "hypertension" stands for a physiological condition of an individual, characterized by high blood pressure. Therefore, the term covers acute hypertension, characterized by a systolic blood pressure which is consistently over 140, and/or a diastolic blood pressure which is consistently over 90. Furthermore, it covers pre-hypertension characterized by a systolic blood pressure between 120 and 139 and/or a diastolic blood pressure between 80 and 89; cf. the new NHLBI Hypertension Standards (National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute; see NHLBI website at NIH <http://nhlbi.nih.gov/>).